



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/620,539	07/16/2003	Manfred Ostertag	14066-024001 / 2003P00076	8440
32864 7590 12/18/2006 FISH & RICHARDSON, P.C. PO BOX 1022 MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55440-1022			EXAMINER LIN, WEN TAI	
			ART UNIT 2154	PAPER NUMBER

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	12/18/2006	PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/620,539

Applicant(s)

OSTERTAG ET AL.

Examiner

Wen-Tai Lin

Art Unit

2154

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10/20/2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20, 22-33, 35-46, 48-58, 60-70 and 72-75 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20, 22-33, 35-46, 48-58, 60-70 and 72-75 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                    | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

### DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-20, 22-33, 35-46, 48-58, 60-70 and 72-75 are presented for examination.

2. It is noted that in the current amendment Applicant attempts to further narrow the scope of the independent claims by requiring "searching at least one implicit data sources according to the defined attributes" instead of "searching at least one of explicit and implicit data sources" as previously stated. It becomes necessary to find out the border line between the so called explicit and implicit data sources. There appears to be no exclusive definitions associated with these two terms except for a couple of examples mentioned throughout the specification. For example, at paragraph 9, Applicant teaches that "[e]xplicit data sources can include explicitly defined attribute information, and implicit data sources can include implicitly defined attribute information," while no further explanation regarding what constitutes the explicitly or implicitly defined attributes is found in the specification. However, at paragraph 16, Applicant refers searching email or other unstructured information to as searching implicit data, as contrast to searching fixed database and at paragraphs 52-53 Applicant further teaches "providing implicit member information based on prior communications, such as emails, exchanged with the members of the enterprise" and "Implicit member information may be defined as information that infers, but does not directly state,

Art Unit: 2154

interest, expertise or responsibility of an individual regarding a certain subject.” Since there is no precise and exclusive definition regarding the implicit data source, the term is being construed, for purpose of prior art rejection in this office action, as “unstructured information such as email.”

3. The text of those sections of Title 35, USC code not included in this action can be found in the prior Office Action.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

4. Claims 1-20, 22-33, 35-46, 48-58, 60-70 and 72-75 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Olivier [U.S. Pat. No. 6480885].

5. Olivier was cited in the last office action.

6. As to claim 1, Olivier teaches the invention as claimed including: a method of mining human capital information, the method comprising:

receiving user input specifying criteria of association with a dynamic target group by defining one or more attributes of a communication group [e.g., col.8 line 66 – col.9 line 13 and Fig. 4; i.e., defining neighborhood to each subscriber require dynamic target grouping];

identifying individuals of the dynamic target group by searching at least one implicit data sources according to the defined attributes [258, 234, Figs.2 and 4-5; col. 10 lines 43-59; and col.6, lines 34-53, wherein user profile may be obtained via email message and/or an inference engine];

communicating with identified individuals of the dynamic target group [e.g., 238, Fig.2];

logging at least some of the communications; and analyzing the logged communications [col.3, lines 23-32 and 57-60; Abstract, lines 15-17].

7. As to claim 2, Olivier further teaches saving the defined attributes [i.e., the attributes forming each group must be saved otherwise the match servers of Fig.7 would not know what to match].

8. As to claim 3, Olivier further teaches communicating with the identified individuals of the dynamic target group includes sending to the identified individuals of the dynamic target group an information request based on at least one of a survey and a questionnaire [e.g., in response to an email of Figs. 8-9].

9. As to claim 4, Olivier further teaches generating a report based on a result of analyzing the logged communications [e.g., col.3, lines 57-60; i.e., report on each subject as individualized archive].

10. As to claim 5, Olivier further teaches accessing an enterprise planning system to identify individuals of the dynamic target group [e.g., Figs. 2 and 3B, wherein Fig.2 illustrates a planning system that is carried out by a system resource of Fig.3B; see also the interpretation of the term "enterprise resource planning system" in paragraph 2 of this office action].

11. As to claim 6, Olivier further teaches sending information to a member of the dynamic target group triggered on an occurrence of a life or work event associated with a member [see the example of Fig.8].

12. As to claim 7, Olivier further teaches defining attributes includes defining attributes based on at least one of special knowledge area, work experience, academic experience, position, and work situation associated with the dynamic target group [col.17, lines 7-14; col.18, lines 5-17].

13. As to claim 8, Olivier further teaches communicating occurs over at least one of a computer network, wireless, the Internet, an Intranet, electronic-mail and voice-mail [Abstract].

14. As to claim 9, Olivier further teaches communicating includes sending to the identified individuals of the dynamic target group at least one of structured communication [e.g., 524 of Fig.9 is structured communication] wherein possible

responses to queries are predefined and unstructured communication wherein possible responses to queries are not predefined [i.e., by default reply to question at 526 of Fig.9 (after satisfying matching criteria) is unstructured and not predefined].

15. As to claim 10, Olivier further teaches that communicating includes distributing information to the identified individuals of the dynamic target group, and receiving feedback from the identified individuals of the dynamic target group [Abstract].

16. As to claim 11, Olivier further teaches providing an enterprise with an ability to make decisions based on a result of analyzing the one or more logged communications [col.3, lines 57-60; col.17, lines 21-27; i.e., filtering uncorrelated material (including spam) is a decision making process based on what's in the archive].

17. As to claim 12, Olivier further teaches that identifying the individuals further comprises searching at least one explicit data source and wherein searching the explicit data sources includes searching data sources having explicitly defined attribute information [e.g., col.6, lines 34-53; col.9, lines 18-29; i.e., explicit data is entered as a user's profile through registration].

18. As to claim 13, Olivier further teaches that searching implicit data sources includes searching data sources having implicitly defined attribute information [e.g.,

Art Unit: 2154

col.16, lines 56-66; i.e., attributes specified in an email requiring additional processing are thus indirectly obtained].

19. As to claims 14-18, 19-20, 22-31, 32-33, 35-40, 44, 56 and 68, since the features of these claims can also be found in claims 1-5 and 6-13, they are rejected for the same reasons set forth in the rejection of claims 1-5 and 6-13 above.

20. As to claim 41-42, Olivier further teaches generating and updating a distribution list of the target group at the time information is exchanged with the target group [e.g., col.25, lines 1-11; col.23, lines 26-50; i.e., in a chat or game setting, updating the list is inherently required because members come and go]

21. As to claims 43, 45-46, 48-55, 57-58, 60-67, 69-70 and 72-75, since the features of these claims can also be found in claims 14, 23, 25-27, 29, 32-33, 35-36, 38-40 and 42, they are rejected for the same reasons set forth in the rejection of claims 14, 23, 25-27, 29, 32-33, 35-36, 38-40 and 42 above.

22. Applicant's arguments filed on 10/20/2006 for claims 1-20, 22-33, 35-46, 48-58, 60-70 and 72-75 have been fully considered but they are not deemed to be persuasive.

Specifically, Applicant argues that (1) Olivier does not teach searching an implicit data source because a preexisting email list as taught in Olivier is not an implicit data source because this list is generated using explicit submissions made by those who



Art Unit: 2154

wish to join the list; and (2) even if a user can override the default settings at the time of sending a message, Olivier's system still determines the distribution list based on the subscriber list as if the user did not override the default subscription setting.

23. The examiner respectfully disagrees with Applicant's remarks.

First, Applicant is reminded that Olivier's dynamic distribution list is generated based on two elements: one being the requester's email message which may contain information overriding his previously submitted default subscription settings, and the other is the database containing profiles of all the registered subscribers. Matching between these two elements produces the desired distribution list. While it may be true that the registered membership belongs to explicit data source, the requester's email message containing updated subscription settings is not explicit. This is because, unlike a fixed database, an email message contains unstructured information [see Applicant's specification at paragraphs 16, 40 and 52-53, wherein emails have been regarded as implicit data source] and may rely on an inference engine to search and extract the key elements out of the unstructured email message [Olivier: col.6 lines 38-42]. As such, it is asserted that the email message is an implicit data source and Olivier's distribution list is produced by searching at least one implicit data source.

For at least the above reasons, it is submitted that the prior art of record reads on the claims.

24. THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

25. A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

### ***Conclusion***

**Examiner note:** Examiner has cited particular columns and line numbers in the references as applied to the claims above for the convenience of the applicant.

Although the specified citations are representative of the teachings of the art and are applied to the specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may apply as well. It is respectfully requested from the applicant in preparing responses, to fully consider the references in entirety as potentially teaching all or part of the claimed invention, as well as the contest of the passage as taught by the prior art or disclosed by the Examiner.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Wen-Tai Lin whose telephone number is (571)272-3969. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday(8:00-5:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Follansbee can be reached on (571)272-3964. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are as follows:


(703)872-9306 for official communications; and

(571)273-3969 for status inquires draft communication.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Wen-Tai Lin

December 7, 2006

  
12/17/06